



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
Milwaukee County
CHRIS ABELE • COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele Announces Reappointment of Chief Human Resources Officer Kerry Mitchell

MILWAUKEE – Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele today announced his reappointment of Kerry Mitchell as the County’s chief human resources officer, following five years of exemplary service to Milwaukee County that has included positively transforming the County’s operational human resources functions, implementing a national award-winning Employee Wellness Program, and developing new and innovative ways to invest in hard-working County employees.

Over the last five years, Ms. Mitchell’s primary focus has been finding ways to invest in and support our most valuable asset -- our employees.

“We’ve made a lot of progress to move the county forward over the past five years and that progress would not be possible without a great workforce. The way we get a great workforce is through leaders like Kerry Mitchell, who is always looking for ways to improve the work environment for our employees,” County Executive Chris Abele said. “Assisted by Ms. Mitchell’s dedication and skills, the County has been able to give employees across-the-board pay raises two years in a row and we are on a sustainable path to a \$15 per hour living wage by 2021. The County’s human resources functions have become more professional, more organized, and more responsive than ever before. Our employees are proud to work for Milwaukee County and our partners in the community are happy to work with us. Ms. Mitchell’s dedication to making the County a premiere employer is a big part of the reason why.”

Under Mitchell’s leadership, the County:

- Started a new employee and development function (including a new online Employee Development Center and hundreds of employee and manager training courses);
- Initiated a tuition reimbursement program;
- Started the County’s first-ever, national award-winning Employee Wellness Program;
- Conducted an extensive compensation study of all County jobs to help ensure internal pay equity;
- Developed equity adjustment pools for each budget to help ensure that employees that do the same job are paid the same salary;
- Created a first-ever employee handbook;
- Launched several new employee communications vehicles; and

- Developed and implemented a first-time centralized New Employee Orientation program with a 98% satisfaction rate.

“In Human Resources we strive to build an engaged, positive, innovative work culture that enables leaders to seek out the best possible talent to work at the County. We help employees and managers navigate challenges in the workplace, in order to pave the way for a safe, positive, service-oriented work environment. It is through the talent and commitment of our employees that Milwaukee succeeds. I am honored to serve the community of Milwaukee County, and eager to continue serving in my role,” Kerry Mitchell said.

Ms. Mitchell has been the driving force behind the County’s first major employee engagement initiative, which underscores our absolute commitment to our people, and demonstrates that improving our work environment is a top priority.

Ms. Mitchell has done significant work in advocating for the hiring and development of women leaders at Milwaukee County. She has been recognized for her volunteer work with Tempo Milwaukee with respect to mentoring programs for women leaders across the greater Milwaukee area. In addition, Ms. Mitchell has also been recognized as an expert on leading transformational change, having been selected as a speaker for the state Society for Human Resources Management conference.

Background:

Ms. Mitchell has an extensive background in human resources. She worked in a number of senior-level human resources positions over 19 years at U.S. Bank and its predecessor companies, managing human resources teams and supporting up to 5,000 employees in corporate divisions across 29 states. In addition to the numerous human resources initiatives she led at U.S. Bank, Ms. Mitchell designed and launched several transformational talent and workflow redesigns that improved efficiency within her department and also led to high quality outcomes and improved customer service.

Ms. Mitchell has a master’s degree in management and organizational behavior, and an undergraduate degree in psychology and business.

When Ms. Mitchell joined the County, the human resources function was decentralized and fragmented. Her experience in analyzing human resources systems, identifying gaps and creating opportunities was integral to our migration away from old, broken processes and outdated ways of thinking. She established a new service-mindset in Human Resources, setting new expectations, and dramatically elevated the role and reputation of her team across our organization to that of a critically important business partner supporting the many services we provide to our community.

Ms. Mitchell’s reappointment to Chief Human Resources Officer for Milwaukee County for a four-year term ending on November 3, 2020 is made pursuant to Wisconsin Statute Sec. 59.17(2) and is subject to confirmation by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors.

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